



Grade Level

6th–12th

Unit Length

5 Lessons | 5 weeks

Standards

- VAR.7 – Create and track sustainable and desirable habits
- VAR.5 – Practice and demonstrate self-awareness of thought processes and behavior

Primary Domain

Valuing and Applying
Rationality

Unit Description

HabitWise is a collection of lessons that teach students how to develop healthy and sustainable habits. The lessons include videos and tools to build students' understanding of habit loops, and how these loops can support their health, improve their productivity, and manage their stress. In the final lesson, students choose from a variety of tools to develop a project that will support them as they continue to develop positive habit loops and monitor their progress.

Unit Objectives

- Students will learn to identify cues that trigger behavior that can form habits.
- Students use and modify a habit loop to develop healthy sustainable habits that can have long-term effects on our lives.
- Students will recognize the importance of being persistent when nurturing new habits.

Key Concepts

- Understanding the elements of habit loops.
- Modifying habit loops to improve sustainability of habits we want to nurture.
- Recognizing and interrupting habit loops for habits we want to crush.



Why Habits Matter

Lesson #1



ALLIANCE FOR
**DECISION
EDUCATION**

Focus Standard

VAR.7 – Create and track sustainable and desirable habits

Suggested Time

35–50 minutes

Resources

- [Video #1: Why Habits Matter](#)
- [Worksheet: Habits and Your Current and Future Self](#)

Impact

Nurturing positive habits over time puts students in control of shaping the life they want to live. In this lesson, students reflect on habits they have developed, and habits they would need to develop to reach their goals.

Objectives

- Students will define *habit* and describe the long-term effects that our habits can have on our lives.
- Students will identify areas in their lives where they want to improve their habits and develop strategies for persistence in these habits.

Optional Teaching Strategies

- Have students track their habits using a habit journal.
- Introduce the [weekly habit recap](#) sheet as a resource students can use in their journals.

Key Vocabulary

- **Habit:** a behavior that becomes automatic from repeating it often.
- **A habit to nurture:** when we recognize that a behavior improves our life, we can work on doing it regularly.
- **A habit to crush:** when we recognize that a behavior has negative effects on our life, we can work on eliminating it.

Differentiation

- Some students might require scaffolding around identifying habits that can impact their future. Consider giving a few examples (cell phone habits, study habits, patterns in their stress management, etc).

What To Look and Listen For

- How are students describing the impact habits can have on their future?
- Can students identify ways to make habits sustainable?
- Can students create behavior patterns to support new habits and maintain persistence?

Engage (20 minutes)

To open the unit, lead your students in a discussion about habits and their effects—positive or negative—on our lives.

Suggested Prompts & Questions:

- Explain in your own words what a habit is.
- What are some different ways habits impact our lives?
- How much control do you think we have over our habits?
- Many people know they need to change a habit, but they struggle to make or sustain the necessary changes in their regular routines. Why do you think these changes are difficult?

Show [Video #1: Why Habits Matter](#) and continue the class discussion by asking about the positive and negative impact of habits they have developed.

Suggested Prompts & Questions:

- Earlier, I asked you to explain what a habit is in your own words. Would you like to add or modify your explanation? If so, what important changes did you make to your explanation?
- Can you name a habit you have that makes your life better?
- Can you name a habit you have that affects you negatively?
- Name something you would like to achieve or get better at. What habit would you like to form that can support your goals in this area?
- How do you think your habits could have a lasting impact on your life?

Apply (10–15 minutes)

Use the worksheet below to dive deeper into examining what values and goals students hold for their current and future selves.

[Worksheet: Habits and Your Current and Future Self](#)

Reflect (5–10 minutes)

Following the lesson, have your students select one habit from the worksheet to write about in their journal. They will focus on this habit for the upcoming week.

Suggested Prompts & Questions:

Pick one habit from your worksheet to begin working on:

- What do you need to do, or what changes do you need to make, to develop this habit? Identify small steps you can take to make this habit sustainable. Be specific!
- Pick a date this week to take the first steps to develop this habit.

Habits and Your Future Self

	List two habits that can help you achieve it.	List two habits that could hurt your chances of achieving it.
What is something you would like to accomplish in the near future (1-2 months from now)? _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ 2. _____ _____	1. _____ _____ 2. _____ _____
What is something that you'd like to accomplish in the distant future (5-10 years)? _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ 2. _____ _____	1. _____ _____ 2. _____ _____

Pick two habits to begin working on.

What can make it difficult to stick to these habits? Why?

What small, incremental steps can you take to ensure you either nurture these helpful habits or crush the harmful habits?



How Habits Can Help Us Manage Stress

Lesson #2



Focus Standard

VAR.7 – Create and track sustainable and desirable habits

Supporting Standard

VAR.5 – Practice and demonstrate self-awareness of thought processes and behavior

Suggested Time

45–50 minutes

Resources

- [Video #2: How Habits Can Help Us Manage Stress](#)
- [Connect it to Your Life Worksheet](#)
- [Check-in on Stress Worksheet](#)
- Habit Journal: A journal where students will track and update their habit process (optional)

Impact

Students learn how the habit loop works and how, specifically, stress-related habit loops affect our lives.

Objectives

- Students will identify the parts of a habit loop and explain how they work together.
- Students will analyze how the habit loop applies in their everyday lives.

Optional Teaching Strategies

- Use the weekly habit recap sheet as a tool to support student journaling and reflection between lessons.

Key Vocabulary

- **Habit loop:** A process that trains our brains to do the same thing over and over again.
- **Cue:** What prompts a habit loop to start. It can be anything from a certain feeling (which could be emotional or physical), a time of day, a place, people you're with, what you did just before—or some combination of those things.
- **Behavior:** The action of the habit.

Differentiation

- Ask a few students to draw their diagrams on the board and describe them to the class. (Check to be sure that their ideas are in the correct parts of the habit loop.)
- Help students understand that stress responses may be subtle or unnoticeable to others (e.g. racing thoughts, forgetfulness, trouble focusing, high heart rate, tightness in chest, sweating, upset stomach).

What To Look and Listen For

- Can students identify satisfaction and negative side effects associated with behaviors?
- Can students identify their own habit loops and the impact they have?
- Are students able to persist when developing new habits or crushing negative habits? If not, are they able to reflect and try new tips?

Engage (20 minutes)

Give your students a few minutes to share about their successes and challenges in working to develop the habit they identified last week.

Suggested Questions:

Last week, we identified some new healthy habits to practice.

- How did you feel when you completed the actions around your helpful habit? Does that motivate you to continue?
- Did you find it challenging at first to start the new habit? Why? What got in the way?
- Did you notice any positive or negative effects because of the changes you made?

Show [Video #2: How Habits Can Help Us Manage Stress](#) and then have students return to their small groups to continue reflecting on the habits they're beginning to develop.

Suggested Questions:

- What is a habit loop? How can habit loops help us interrupt negative habits and form better habits?
- Considering the habits you identified in the last lesson, what cues (feeling, time of day, place, people) can help remind you of doing the habit?
- Is there a small reward you could consider when you follow through with your commitment to developing the habit?

Apply (10–15 minutes)

Bring the class back together to discuss the satisfaction and negative side effects associated with certain behaviors, completing a few examples together as shown in the table below.

Each of the following behaviors could offer some sense of satisfaction. Some would be likely to have a positive, long-lasting influence on one's life, but others would be likely to have negative side effects.

- What satisfaction could be associated with each behavior (even if it's not a habit you would have)?
- What negative side effects could be associated with each behavior?

Behavior	Satisfaction	Negative Side Effects
Having a sugary drink every afternoon		
Packing a lunch the night before it's needed		
Starting a conversation with a friend by gossiping about someone else		

Reflect (10–15 minutes)

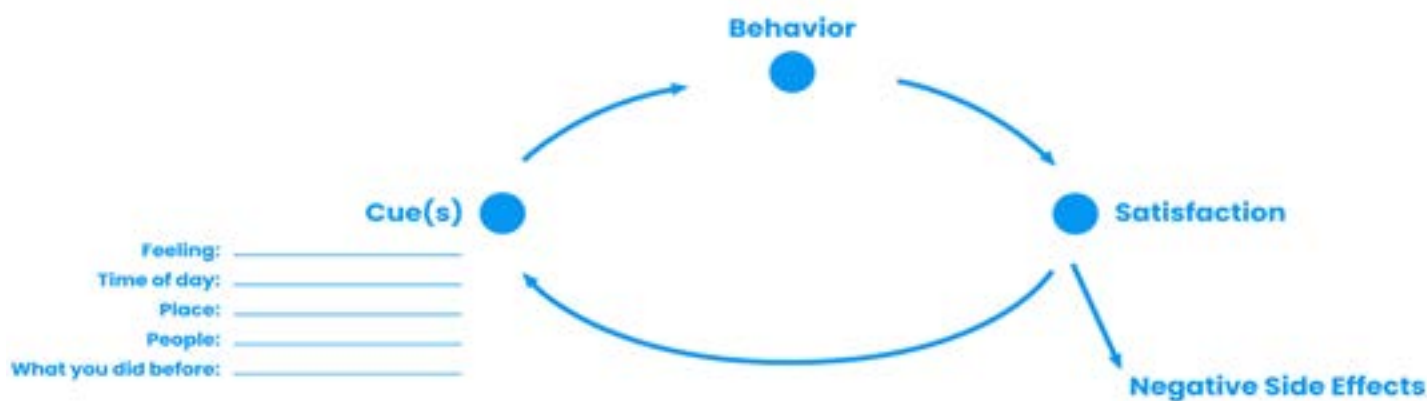
Give your students time to analyze their own habit loops using the worksheets available at the end of this lesson.

Connect It to Your Life

Habit Loop Review

Write one of your current habits (from any area of your life) that you'd like to continue to **nurture** because you think it improves your life:

Fill in the blanks below to show how it follows the habit loop.



Cue(s):

Feeling:

Time of day:

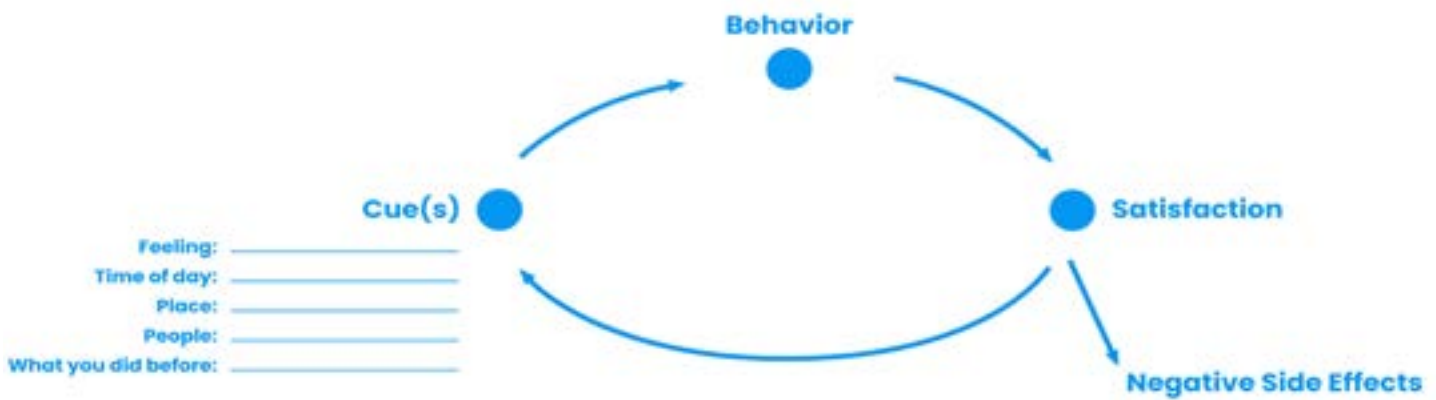
Place:

People:

What you did before:

Write one of your current habits (in any area of your life) that you'd like to **crush** because you think it has/could have a negative effect on your life:

Fill in the blanks below to show how it follows the habit loop.



Cue(s):

Feeling: _____

Time of day: _____

Place: _____

People: _____

What you did before: _____

Check-in on Stress

What things tend to cause you stress?

How can you tell if you are feeling stressed? (Think about what changes in your mind and/or body.)

List the things you currently do to relieve stress. What are some positive ways you relieve stress? Are there any negative ways that you could replace with positive ways?



How Habits Can Help Us Be Healthy

Lesson #3



Focus Standard

VAR.7 – Create and track sustainable and desirable habits

Supporting Standard

VAR.5 – Practice and demonstrate self-awareness of thought processes and behavior

Suggested Time

40–45 minutes

Resources

- [Video #3: How Habits Can Help Us Be Healthy](#)
- [Heatly Habits Worksheet](#)
- [Improve Your Habit Loop Worksheet](#)

Impact

Healthy, sustainable habits can support us mentally, emotionally, and physically. In this lesson, students learn how they can use the habit loop to improve their physical health.

Objectives

- Students will be able to identify ways to improve habits by substituting “better-for-you” behaviors in the habit loop.
- Students will evaluate their life habits, how they relate to one another, and improvements they could make.

Optional Teaching Strategies

- Use the weekly habit recap sheet as a tool to support student journaling and reflection between lessons.

Differentiation

- As necessary, review the parts of the habit loop learned in Lesson #2.

What To Look and Listen For

- Can students describe the impact habits can have on their future?
- Can students identify life habits that are supporting—or getting in the way of—their goals?
- Are students discussing ways to make habits sustainable?

Engage (10 minutes)

Prior to watching the video, give your students time in small groups to reflect on how their life habits (what we eat, how much we exercise, when we sleep) impact their ability to make good decisions.

Suggested Questions:

We often find new ways to improve our habits when we learn about what has worked well or been problematic for others, so you're encouraged to share your ideas with the class.

- In what ways do our life habits (what we eat, how much we exercise, when we sleep) affect our day-to-day ability to make good decisions?
 - What things get in the way of eating right, or getting enough sleep and exercise?
 - What negative side effects can occur from not getting enough sleep and exercise, or eating unhealthy foods?
-

Apply (10–15 minutes)

Show [Video #3: How Habits Can Help Us Be Healthy](#) and follow up with the suggested prompts and questions below. Consider collecting student responses on sticky notes so the class can do a gallery walk—looking at common stressors, positive habits, and helpful tips.

Suggested Questions:

In the video, they mentioned that habits usually have long-term impacts on our lives in contrast to one-time events that usually have short-term effects. Jayden has a habit that helps him unwind after a busy day at school, but it ends up causing some negative side-effects.

- Do you have any similar habits that help you cope with a stresser in life but creates problems in other areas?
 - Can you describe a better habit that would help you manage stress without the negative side effects?
 - What helpful tips can you implement that would help you stick to these better habits?
-

Reflect (10–15 minutes)

Introduce the [Healthy Habits Survey](#) and [Improve Your Habit Loop](#) worksheets to aid in your students' development of healthy habits. Following the worksheet activity, have your students reflect on their habit process in small groups or their journals.

Suggested Questions:

- Rate yourself on how well you have been able to stick to your habits. What modifications, rewards, and practices can you take to make it easier to develop a sustainable habit? Ask others in the group for advice.
- What cues can you identify? What possible negative side effects should you be mindful of?

Healthy Habits Survey

When you improve your health habits, you feel more energetic, which boosts your mood and helps you be more productive. Your responses to these questions can help you recognize where you might make some changes.

Sleep

Approximate time you usually go to bed on a weeknight:

Approximate time you usually wake up on a weekday:

When you have trouble sleeping, what things typically get in the way?

Circle all that apply.

Watching TV	Playing Video Games	Social Media	Texting
Noises in Your Room	Noises Outside Your Home	Too Much Light in Your Room	Your Thoughts
Other: _____			

In general, do you think you get enough sleep?

Exercise

List the ways you typically exercise each week (Make sure to include all the different types of exercise you do in a day—including things like walking to school or playing at the park—not just going to the gym or playing a sport):

In general, do you think you get enough exercise?

List any forms of exercise that interest you, but you haven't tried yet (or don't do consistently):

Eating

What unhealthy foods are tough for you to resist?

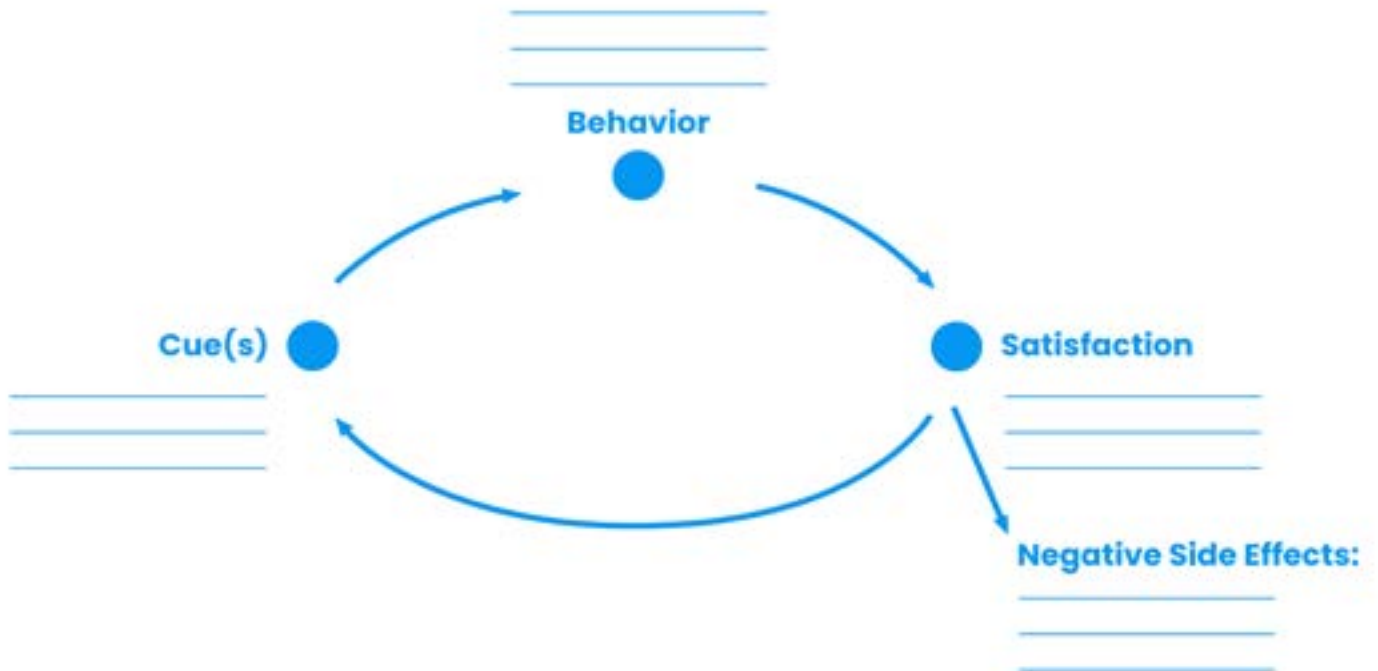
What are your favorite healthy foods?

Are there new foods you'd like to try?

Improve Your Habit Loop

Pick a habit to develop that can improve either your sleep, exercise routine, or eating patterns.
Fill out the habit loop to help support your efforts in successfully developing this habit.

*Remember: with practice these habits will become more automatic and require less intentional effort.





How Habits Can Help Us Be Productive

Lesson #4



Focus Standard

VAR.7 – Create and track sustainable and desirable habits

Supporting Standard

VAR.5 – Practice and demonstrate self-awareness of thought processes and behavior

Suggested Time

40–45 minutes

Resources

- [Video #4: How Habits Can Help Us Be Productive](#)
- [Connect it to Your Life Worksheet](#)
- Tool: [Tomato Timer](#)
- Article: [“Why working in sprints works”](#)

Impact

Students learn how they can use the habit loop to strengthen their attention and avoid procrastination.

Objectives

- Students will be able to recognize the impact that technology and other distractions have on our ability to pay attention to important tasks.
- Students will be able to chunk large assignments into smaller tasks and develop a strategy for working and taking breaks.

Optional Teaching Strategies

- Have students use the weekly habit recap sheet as a resource to use in between lessons.

Key Vocabulary

- **Instant gratification:** Doing what is fun or easy to get an immediate reward.
- **Delayed gratification:** Postponing an instant reward to work toward a better long-term reward.

Differentiation

- Review the parts of the habit loop learned in Lesson #3.
- Review how to use [this timer](#), which follows the pomodoro method of breaking study time into sprints of 25-minute increments with breaks.

What To Look and Listen For

- Are students constructing knowledge around habit formation, and integrating techniques to support their habits?
- Are students connecting the lessons in this unit and building on their conversations with each other?

Engage (10–15 minutes)

Give your students time in small groups to reflect on procrastination, and situations where it may impact their productivity.

Suggested Questions:

- What are some situations/tasks where you find you are most likely to procrastinate?
- Are there times where you spend too much time on your phone or computer? When? Why?
- What negative side effects do you experience by procrastinating?

Show [Video #4: How Habits Can Help Us Be Productive](#) and, as a class, discuss the strategies shown in the video.

Suggested Questions:

- There were several methods introduced in the video that can help us tackle large projects and papers in addition to helping us manage our time better. Have you tried any of these methods before? What has worked for you?
- Both “chunking” large assignments into smaller steps with due dates, and working in sprints with small breaks were mentioned. Why do you think these methods work? What would you like to try?
- What are the cues you will look for that let you know when you need to implement a healthy behavior that can support your productivity?

Apply (15 minutes)

Share with your students that the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children ages 3–18 get no more than two hours of total screen time per day because it can lead to weight gain (due to inactivity), trouble sleeping, and diminished social skills (from not interacting with people face-to-face as much).

Suggested Questions:

- Do you agree with this recommendation? Why or why not?
- Do you think it’s possible in today’s society to limit screen time?
- Does screen time have a negative effect on your ability to develop and sustain healthy habits? If so, how? If not, why? What limits do you set for yourself?

Have your students complete the “Connect It To Your Life” worksheet.

Reflect (15 minutes)

Give students time to share their responses on the “Connect It To Your Life” worksheet and discuss. After discussion, provide time to read about and explore the tomato timer tool and the supporting article on why it works.

[Tomato Timer](#)

[“Why Working in Springs Works”](#)

Suggested Questions:

- In what ways do you think developing healthy habits can support your productivity?
- Reflect back on the habits you have been nurturing. Would you like to modify or add a habit that would help support your productivity or study habits?
- Take a look at the tomato timer and commit to trying it this week when you study. Try to resist checking your phone during short breaks and putting your phone away at the end of a long break. Working in these “sprints” has been shown to improve effectiveness and productivity for many.

Connect it to Your Life

Answer these questions to make connections between the topic of the video and your own life.

We often feel like we don't have enough time in our day to get stuff done, but we could probably find more time if we cut back on how much we use our smartphones, watch TV, and play video games. How much we use our tech devices isn't usually obvious because it's spread throughout the day.

Complete the table below to think more about tech device usage.

Your Tech Usage	Approximate amount of time to spend on this activity each day:	Reason for amount:	Approximate range of time you actually spend on this activity each day:	
			Low end:	High end:
Using Smartphone				
Watching TV				
Playing computer or video games				

Imagine that you have to complete a tough homework assignment. Explain why it would be better to spend 15 minutes checking social media and your messages after you're done working instead of taking three, five-minute breaks throughout your homework session.

Note: Our minds continue to process what we've seen online even after we're done looking at it. When we're trying to focus on something important, we wonder if there are more updates to what we saw, which tempts us to check again, distracting us even more. We think that checking our phones takes only a little bit of time, but it adds up, considering how often we do it, and we end up taking longer to finish our work because we're distracted by our thoughts.

The video mentioned how facing a disorganized space can increase stress hormones, which makes it difficult to think. Describe one way that you can organize your school materials, personal belongings, or reminders (for assignments, appointments, and plans) better so it helps to lower your stress.

In each column, list two habits (not already mentioned in the video) that could...

Have a negative effect on your productivity:	Help you increase your productivity:



Independent Habit Project

Lesson #5



Focus Standard

VAR.7 – Create and track sustainable and desirable habits

Supporting Standard

VAR.5 – Practice and demonstrate self-awareness of thought processes and behavior

Suggested Time

- 40–50 minutes
- Independently: Students complete the Habit Tracker Chart—a few minutes a day for a month.
- In-class: Complete Weekly Recap sheet—15 minutes once a week for a month.

Resources

- [Developing Habits That Work for You Worksheet](#)
- [Habit Tracker Worksheet](#)
- [Weekly Recap Worksheet](#)
- [Extra tips and worksheets](#)

Impact

Developing healthy and sustainable habits doesn't happen overnight. In this lesson, students explore different tools to develop a plan for committing to a habit and tracking their success.

Objectives

- Students will be able to identify a variety of habits that would be worthwhile for them to crush or nurture in the categories of wellness, money management, productivity, and relationships.

Optional Teaching Strategies

- [Habit Tracker Chart](#)
- [Weekly Recap](#)
- [Extra tips for nurturing a habit](#)

Differentiation

- Review any parts of the habit loop learned in Lessons #1–4.
- Allow students to work on developing habits in pairs, if desired. For example, they could create an exercise plan together.

What To Look and Listen For

- What tools did students find useful? Did they feel like they could actually commit to developing the habit they selected?
- Do students actively monitor their progress?
- Are they able to pinpoint challenges they face and adjust?

Engage (10 minutes)

Give students time to journal to reflect on the successes and challenges they have seen so far, as they strive to develop healthy habits that will help them achieve their goals.

Suggested Journaling Prompt:

We have been working to develop healthy habits for four weeks! What successes have you seen? What challenges have you faced? What would you like to improve?

Apply (20–25 minutes)

Introduce students to the worksheets, including:

- Developing Habits That Work for You
- Ways to Nurture Habits
- Extra Tips for Nurturing Your Habits
- Weekly Recap
- Habit Tracker Chart

Discuss the purpose of each worksheet and how it might be useful. Share them with students so they can begin selecting tools and strategies to support their development of healthy, sustainable habits. You could also let students choose small groups based on tools they've selected to discuss how they might be useful.

Have students write a commitment—with clear next steps—to develop ways to track their progress using these tools.

Reflect (10–15 minutes)

As a class, determine how you can support each other with your commitments. You could create a plan together, possibly including designated class time to track progress, and/or reading articles together to keep students on track with their healthy habits.

Developing Habits That Work For You

Ways to Nurture Habits

How I can make it more convenient:	How I can make fun:	How I can remind myself to do the new behavior:
How I'll track my progress:		Who I would Involve:
Mobile App: _____ Chart or spreadsheet Calendar Journal Other: _____		Someone working on the same habit Details: _____ Someone to coach or hold me accountable Details: _____ No one; I'd rather work alone. Reason: _____

Anticipating Obstacles

	Obstacles* that could prevent me from sticking to the new behavior:	What I can do to make sure I stick to the new behavior if I run into an obstacle:
1.		
2.		
3.		

*Such as specific temptations, distractions, weather, etc.

Rewards

What rewards could help me stick to the new behavior for...

2 weeks:	A month:	3 months:
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Monthly Habit Tracker

Month:

Write the habit(s) you're working on in the first column. Every day you engage in the habit, shade the box that corresponds with the day. (For months with fewer than 31 days just cross out the extra columns.)

Habit(s)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Make notes about specific activities (ex: specific exercise video) and tools (ex: a habit tracker app) that you have tried while working on your habits:

Activities and tools that worked well for me:

Activities and tools that I wouldn't try again:

Other observations about my habits this month:

Weekly Recap

Recap and reflect on the experiences you've had working to crush and nurture habits this week. This will help you monitor your progress and make any necessary changes during the next week.

	Habit I'm nurturing: -----	Habit I'm crushing: -----
What successes have I had?		
What obstacles have I run into?		
What changes can you make to help you stay motivated and track your progress?		
What rewards can help you stay motivated this week?		
How will this reward be helpful? Consider any possible negative side-effects to this reward.		
What have I learned about myself from working on this habit?		

Optional Lesson Extensions

Habit Change in the Community

Complete the “Nurturing A Habit: My Project Plan” and/or “Crushing A Habit: My Project Plan” sheets to develop a plan to help your class, school, community, or family crush an old habit or nurture a new one. Pay special attention to what would make the habit convenient and rewarding for a large group of people motivated to do the habit.

Bumper Stickers

Design a bumper sticker that could motivate people to change their habits for the better. Keep in mind that the best bumper stickers have brief, clever messages in easy-to-read colors.

How Much Do Habits Matter?

The video “Why Habits Matter” ended with this statement: “When you take control of your habits, you take control of shaping the life you want to live.”

- Now that you’ve learned more about how we change and form habits and how it applies to your life, what best represents how you feel about that statement: strongly agree, agree, neutral/unsure, disagree, or strongly disagree?
- Explain your answer in detail with at least three strong examples. You can use examples from your own life, what you’ve observed in the lives of people you know, or what you’ve learned about the habits of high-profile people.

Evaluate the Bullet Journaling Technique

Although many people these days are using wearable technology and smartphone apps to track their habits and avoid procrastination, many people find that using a well-organized, handwritten notebook works better for them. Watch this video about the technique of “bullet journaling” and explore the website. Do you think this technique would work for you? If so, explain why you think specific details you saw on bulletjournal.com would help you. If you don’t think it would work for you, explain why not and what methods you think would work better for you (and why).

Extra Tips for Nurturing Your Habits

If you are successful in developing one healthy habit, it's likely that your willpower will increase, which will make it easier for you to stick to habits in other areas of your life. However, it can be tough to find that first bit of willpower you need to get started. Once you've used the habit loop to figure out what you want to work on, here are some tips that can give you an extra boost to stick to your new habit in those tough first weeks, or if you ever feel like giving up along the way.

Make it convenient to stick to your new habits

Instead of making excuses about how you can't stick to a habit because you don't have the time or the right supplies, do everything you can to make it easy for you to succeed in your habit.

Examples:

- Keep healthy snacks in your backpack so you're less tempted to get chips at the convenience store on your way home.
- Stock a desk with all the supplies you'd need to do your homework (like pencils and a sharpener, paper, erasers, computer charger, snacks, etc.) so you're not distracted by having to look for them.
- Get your family to vote on a restaurant you could all go to every week to catch up on each other's lives.

Make it inconvenient to fall back into old habits

Try to avoid distractions and temptations that can get in the way of progress.

Examples:

- Recognize what you can do in moderation ("It's no problem for me to play this game for 20 minutes and then get back to work") and what you need to avoid ("I'm not buying ice cream for dessert anymore because I'll eat the whole carton in one sitting").
- Put your phone in another room while you do your homework.
- Unsubscribe from marketing emails from your favorite clothing store so you aren't tempted to buy something during every sale.
- Stop following social media accounts that annoy you.

Use reminders

Just because you've done a certain behavior a few times doesn't mean it's a habit. Setting reminders can help you make sure that too much time doesn't pass before you do it again.

Examples:

- Use a monthly habit tracker chart to fill in the boxes for the habit(s) that matter to you.
- Schedule it on a calendar for a particular time so you don't keep pushing it off until "later" and no one/nothing else can take you away from it.
- Use a habit tracker app that uses sound/vibration to alert you that it's time to do your habit.

Anticipate obstacles

Our habits stay on track when we prepare for being out of our typical routines or environments (like at a birthday party or on vacation), or around certain people who don't have the same habits.

Examples:

- Use "if-then" planning, which means planning in advance what you'll do if you can't avoid an obstacle or temptation. ("If Damon tries to pick a fight, I'm going to change the subject so we talk about a class/sports/music/movies instead.")
- Surf the urge: tell yourself you'll wait 15 minutes instead of giving into an impulse right away. The craving will often pass.
- Make a playlist of workout videos you can do indoors if the weather's bad.

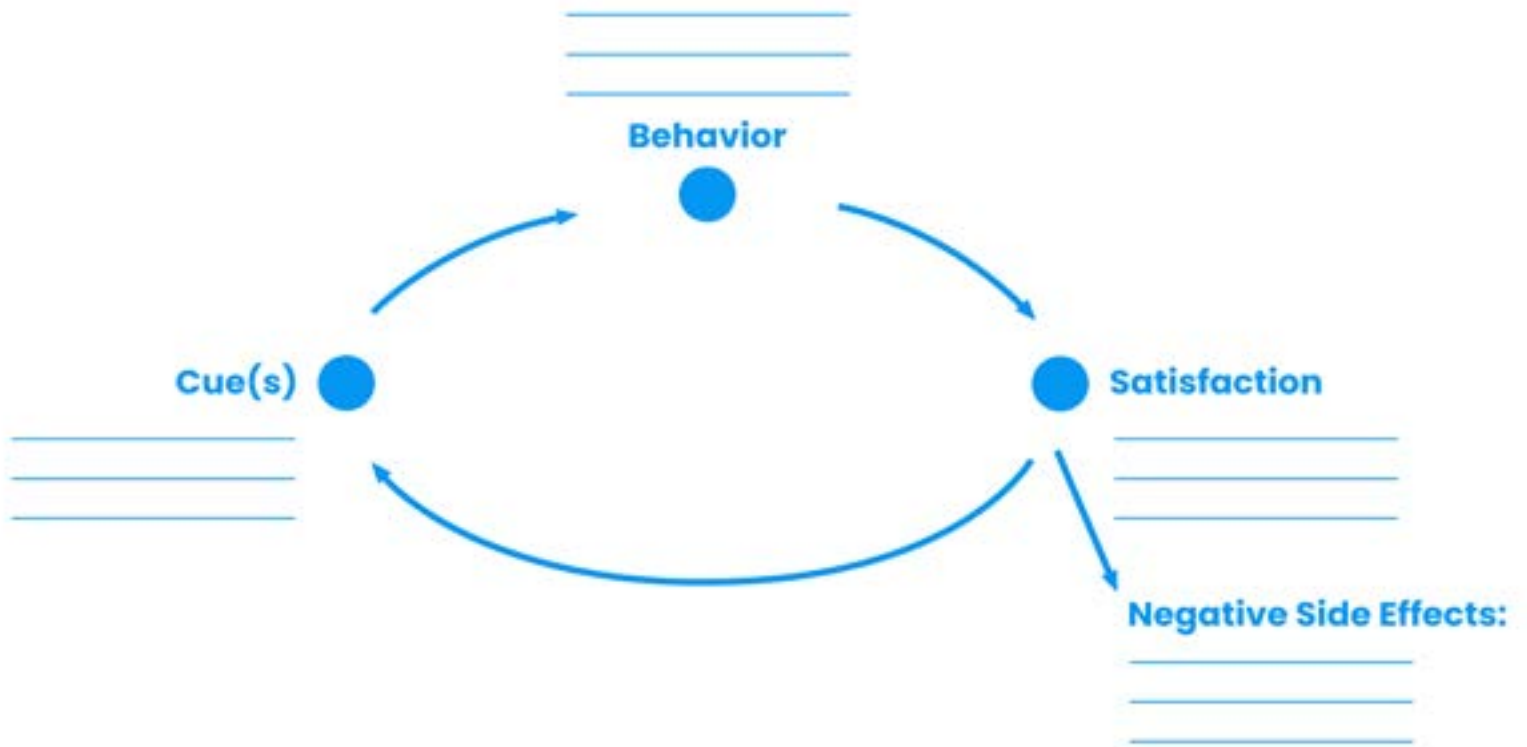
Don't give up!

Don't get discouraged if you don't see results immediately. Give yourself credit for the actions you took to start the process in the first place, and know that in probably just a few weeks you'll have even more reason to reward yourself.

Whenever you feel like giving up on your habit, look back at the reasons why you said it matters to you and ask yourself:

- Does it make sense for me to stop working on this habit (or to work on a slightly different one) because my reasons have actually changed?
- Have I just run into a temporary rough patch? If so, what can I do to help me move past it and recommit to my habit?

Habit Loop



What better-for-you behavior could you substitute to get a similar satisfaction, without negative side-effects?
